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Press Release

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FEDERAL AND STATE PARTNERS TO TEST NATIONAL EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM IN ALASKA

WASHINGTON – The Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the State of Alaska, and the Alaska Broadcasters’ Association will conduct a statewide exercise of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) in Alaska on Wednesday, January 6, 2010, at 10 am local time (2 pm ET). Radio and television broadcast stations and cable television systems across the state of Alaska will participate in the exercise aimed at testing the capabilities of the EAS system. With the help of the Alaska Broadcasters Association, public service announcements informing the public about the test were distributed to television and radio stations on December 21st.

“Periodically exercising our communications capabilities is an important step to ensure that we, as a country, are prepared for an emergency,” said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate. “This is only a test, but it also serves as an important reminder that just as our federal, state, and local teams are taking steps to be prepared, so should families across our country. Families can log onto Ready.gov to learn the few simple steps they can take to be prepared for an emergency.”

The EAS is a national public warning system that allows the President to address the Nation during a national emergency. Parts of the system may be used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information such as AMBER (child abduction) alerts and severe weather information, and many individuals across the country have already experienced emergency alerts and tests over broadcast media generated by their state and local officials. The alert and warning system includes U.S. broadcasters, cable television systems, wireless cable systems, Satellite Digital Audio Radio Service (SDARS) providers, direct broadcast satellite (“DBS”) service providers, and others. The January 6th exercise will test the Presidential alert and warning capabilities over radio and television broadcast stations and cable television systems only.

FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski said, “The nation’s Emergency Alert System serves an instrumental role in notifying the public of impending or ongoing emergencies. The Alaska exercise will help determine how to further improve the nation’s alerting system and better prepare us in our ongoing efforts to implement Next Generation EAS. The FCC welcomes this opportunity to work with our federal, state, and local partners – as well as with Alaska EAS participants – to carry out this regional exercise.”

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“I am happy that Alaska is able to participate in this important test of the emergency alert system,” said Alaska Governor Sean Parnell. “Here in Alaska we vigorously test our alert systems under extreme conditions. Alaska is an excellent proving ground for this exercise of the national system that, in the event of a real emergency, will provide the public critical information that could increase safety or even save lives.”

Please remember, this is an exercise only. When the exercise is over, regular programming will resume. As the federal, state and local governments prepare for, and test their capabilities, this exercise should also serve as a reminder that everyone should establish an [emergency preparedness kit](#) and [emergency plan](#) for themselves and their family, and stay informed about what to do during an emergency.

FEMA’s mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

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